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UPI A32N AJ

NIGHT LEAD POWERS

POUND, VA., MARCH 11 (UPI)--THE MOUNTAIN FOLK OF THIS SOUTHWESTERN VIRGINIA AREA ARE SET TO GIVE U2 PILOT FRANCIS GARY POWERS A HERO'S WELCOME HOME TOMORROW.

SECRECY STILL SHROUDS THE ACTIVITIES OF THE LOCAL BOY WHO BECAME A WORLD-WIDE FIGURE WHEN HIS RECONNAISSANCE PLANE CRASHED DURING A FLIGHT OVER RUSSIA IN MAY, 1960. BUT BILL HENDRICK, PUBLICITYMAN FOR THE HOMECOMING CELEBRATION, SAID HE WAS TOLD POWERS "WILL BE PRODUCED AT 2 P.M. (EST) MONDAY AT THE NATIONAL GUARD ARMORY AT BIG STONE GAP, 31 MILES SOUTHWEST OF HERE.

"I HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT A COLOR GUARD WILL BE SUPPLIED FOR POWERS FOR SOME POINT OF DEPARTURE TO THE ARMORY," SAID HENDRICK. "THAT'S ALL I KNOW."

THE LAST PUBLIC APPEARANCE OF THE 32-YEAR-OLD PILOT, FREED FROM A RUSSIAN PRISON IN A SWAP FOR SOVIET SPY RUDOLPH ABEL LAST MONTH, WAS BEFORE A CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE ON TUESDAY. HE HAS NOT BEEN SEEN SINCE THEN, EXCEPT FOR A CHECKUP AT A WASHINGTON HOSPITAL.

HIGH SCHOOL BANDS FROM BIG STONE GAP, NORTON AND APPALACHIA ARE SCHEDULED TO GREET POWERS. ALSO ON HAND WILL BE A COLOR GUARD AND NATIONAL GUARD UNITS AND MAYORS FROM EACH OF WISE COUNTY'S SEVEN TOWNS TO EXTEND PERSONAL WELCOMES TO POWERS.